

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application; the status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 11, 12, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,519,098 B2 to Nagaoka in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0011690 A1 to URYU and U.S. Patent No. 6,144,493 to Okuyama et al.

Claims 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,917,661 to Tochigi et al in view of URYU and Okuyama.

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tochigi in view of URYU and Okuyama as applied to claim 13 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,292,306 B1 to Betensky.

Claims 1-10, 16, 17 and 20-23 are allowed.

Claims 11-15, 18, and 19 have been cancelled herein by this amendment. The sole reason for this is to place the application as a whole in condition for allowance, such that a patent will issue for the allowed claims.

The rejection of claims 11, 12, 18 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Nagaoka in view of URYU and Okuyama, is respectfully traversed based on the following.

Claims 11, 12, 18 and 19 have been cancelled herein by this amendment to allow the allowed claims to issue. Thus, the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Nagaoka in view of URYU and Okuyama, is moot.

The rejection of claims 11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Tochigi in view of URYU and Okuyama, is respectfully traversed based on the following.

Claims 11 and 13 have been cancelled herein by this amendment to allow the allowed claims to issue. Thus, the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Tochigi in view of URYU and Okuyama, is moot.

The rejection of claims 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Tochigi in view of URYU and Okuyama as applied to claim 13 above, and further in view of Betensky, is respectfully traversed based on the following.

Claims 14 and 15 have been cancelled herein by this amendment to allow the allowed claims to issue. Thus, the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Tochigi in view of URYU and Okuyama as applied to claim 13 above, and further in view of Betensky, is moot.

Accordingly, prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance for allowed claims 1-10, 16, 17, and 20-23 is hereby respectfully requested.

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and an early reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

This Amendment does not increase the number of independent claims, does not increase the total number of claims, and does not present any multiple dependency claims. Accordingly, no fee based on the number or type of claims is currently due. However, if a

fee, other than the issue fee, is due, please charge this fee to Sidley Austin Brown & Wood LLP's Deposit Account No. 18-1260.

Respectfully submitted,

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